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African American Oral History Project

Kelli Johnson

Marshall University, johnson28@marshall.edu

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African American Oral History Project

Contact Kelli Johnson at kelli.johnson@marshall.edu for more information or to arrange an oral history

This project started when I offered to help identify photos donated to the University Archives by Sandra Clements and Delores Johnson. I am currently working with both individuals as well as additional community members to identify subjects of the photos. In addition, I will be helping Sandra Clements and Delores Johnson to continue to research and write a book on the history of African Americans in Huntington, WV. I began by collecting oral histories over the summer of 2018 after receiving a grant from the WV Humanities Council. We are training several young people from the neighborhood to interview and record community elders. I am continuing to collect oral histories this year and will use information for the book project as well as working with Dr. Trowbridge, the creator of the CLIO app, to include sound from the recording in CLIO entries.

Its also important to save other memories. If you saw this mornings paper, you might have seen the article about the African American Genealogy Day that we hosted yesterday. Mrs. Emma Barnett donated hundreds of pictures of community members from the early 1900s. These are priceless! We want to save pictures, brochures, yearbooks, newspapers! The Special Collections Department at MU Libraries is actively collecting materials to help preserve our history, the history of Fairfield and of black folk in Huntington. We digitize these things so that they are available for everyone to see.

I will be working with the Marie Redd Center to set up times to record folks in the neighborhood who would like to participate. Check out the research guide at <https://libguides.marshall.edu/AAH> to find the oral histories and other materials related to our history. And Professor Thompson from Special Collections and I are happy to talk with anyone who has materials they want to save and/or donate.

Please email me with any questions or to set up an interview time!